

Proceedings of General Assembly

Fourth Day—Monday Morning.

The proceedings of Monday morning were printed last week from a telegraphic report. To this we now add some details.

After the devotional exercises, led by Rev. B. B. Knapp, the Minutes were read and approved, and the telegram from the Northern General Assembly was received.

A message of sympathy was received from the Methodist Episcopal Church, through its Board of Missions, in the case of the accusations against our own African missionaries, Messrs. Morrison and Sheppard.

Whereas, it has come to our attention that two missionaries, Messrs. Morrison and Sheppard, representatives of the Presbyterian Church in the United States in the Congo Free State have been cited to trial by the Belgian Government for certain exposures of alleged cruelties practiced on the natives; and

Whereas, the questions involved are of general concern, affecting the rights and privileges of missionaries in all lands in their relation to the people among whom they labor; and

Whereas, the alleged statements that have given offense to the Belgian authorities are matters of common report from many reliable sources, including that of American consuls; therefore be it

Resolved by this Board, That we join in a protest against any such effort to silence the righteous and proper criticism of missionaries against wrongs and cruelties practiced on the people they serve, as long as such protests are based on established facts.

Resolved further, That in such cases the dictates of civilization should guarantee to the accused persons the fullest opportunity to establish the truth of their assertions and the justice of their criticisms.

Resolved, That this Board urge upon the authorities at Washington that they look into this question and use all proper endeavor to see that nothing short of exact justice be accorded these worthy citizens of our country, and that their work be not needlessly hindered.

A commission was appointed to try the complaint of Rev. W. H. Mills vs. the Synod of South Carolina. Ministers, R. M. Hall, chairman, T. S. Knox, W. J. Caldwell, J. H. Henderlite, T. H. Watkins, T. C. Croker, P. C. Irwin, C. E. Robertson, P. L. Bruce, C. D. Gilkeson, M. W. Doggett, F. W. Thompson, Clyde Johnson, L. L. Wilson; Elders, J. P. Carmichael, R. T. Dunlap, C. M. Hanna, R. L. J. Smith, R. W. McDonald, Thos. L. Tate, B. F. Hunt, W. T. Williams, J. R. Forgey, J. W. Butler, M. E. Gilmore, W. F. Murphy, G. B. Patterson.

This complaint concerns the question of receiving into the Church in Africa or China, a man who while an idolater, had married two wives. The commission did not sustain the complaint; nine members dissenting.

Another Commission was appointed to try the complaint of W. H. Sorey and J. B. Long vs. the Presbytery of Eastern Texas. Ministers, W. H. Fraser, chairman, Frank G. Hartman, C. I. Stacy, J. E. Wylie, B. B. Knapp, Luther Link, F. K. Sims, L. Humphreys, H. W. Burwell, Wm. A. Rolle, Newton Smith, F. M. Eversole, W. M. Walsh, A. G. Wardlaw; Elders, Jno. T. Owen, W. M. Elliott, Job Going, T. E. Hammock, H. K. White, P. Pelham, Chas. C. Fox, J. B. Chambers, Henry Ginder, S. M. Vaughn, J. B. Gracey, H. H. Lewis, E. G. Richard.

It questioned the right of a Presbytery to dismiss a church to another denomination. The decision of the Commission is that in the matter of the complaint of H. Sorey and J. B. Long vs. the Presbytery of Eastern Texas, the commission sustain the complaint for the following reason: A Presbytery has the constitutional right to dismiss a church to another Presbytery, and when the Presbytery of Eastern Texas dismissed the Jacksonville church to the Presbytery of Trinity, U. S. A., and received notice of its reception and enrollment from the stated clerk of Trinity Presbytery, U. S. A., the said church became a member of the Trinity Presbytery, U. S. A., and passed from the jurisdiction of the Eastern Texas Presbytery.

The effect of this judgment is that the church of Jacksonville is and has been since the acceptance of its letters by the Presbytery of Trinity, U. S. A., a member of the Trinity Presbytery, U. S. A., and therefore, not within the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas.

The committee ad interim, appointed to formulate a law as to Church property, and also to devise a plan for securing the property of our educational institutions so as to guarantee donors that their donations will not pass out of the control of the Church, requested the Assembly to give to the committee additional time. The committee believe they can, within the next year, submit a plan on both subjects which will meet the approval of the Church.

The request was granted.

The overture from Abingdon Presbytery relative to the founding of a Calvin Memorial University was referred to the committee on schools and colleges.

A telegraphic message was received from the Cumberland Presbyterian Assembly, extending their greetings and referring to I John 4:1, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they

A reply to the telegram to the President, relative to the trial of Messrs. Morrison and Sheppard, was read as follows:

Washington, D. C., May 24, 1909.
W. A. Alexander, Stated Clerk of General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., Savannah, Georgia.

The President directs me to acknowledge your telegram of May 21st. The Department of State on May third cabled its minister at Brussels to ask postponement of the Hbel suit against the American missionaries, Morrison and Sheppard, and to request trial at some more convenient point. The minister, however, was informed that according to Belgian law, the Belgian Government is incompetent to order postponement or transfer of civil cases in the Congo, and that the only authority competent to postpone or transfer a case to another judicial district is the court itself upon petition of defendants. The minister was further informed that Morrison and Sheppard were already en-route to Leopoldville with their witnesses. The American consul at Boma is in close touch with the situation, and is instructed to exercise appropriate good offices if necessary.

KNOX.

The following reply was sent:

Hon. P. C. Knox, Secretary of State.
Dear Sir: This is to acknowledge the receipt of your telegraphic reply of this morning to the communication of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States to the President on May 24th, touching the matter of the missionaries, Mor-

rison and Sheppard. The General Assembly directs me to convey to you and to his Excellency, the President, its thanks for your active interest in behalf of these gentlemen and to express the hope that you will continue to use your good offices for their protection, as their further needs may require.

Respectfully,

W. A. ALEXANDER, Stated Clerk.

Report of Permanent Committee on Evangelistic Work.

Fathers and Brethren:

In undertaking the work assigned it by the Greensboro Assembly your Permanent Committee of Evangelistic Work found itself embarrassed in the very beginning of its task by the liberality of the resolution calling for its creation. This committee was appointed "to organize and direct the distinctively evangelistic work of our Church," under which instruction, we were given authority to take any step, execute any plan, which might be included in the idea of organization and direction.

Your committee has striven earnestly to show its appreciation of the confidence reposed in it by giving the Church a faithful, careful and conservative administration of the trust, conducting its work along lines which we believed the whole Church would approve.

We were aware of the fact that in every section of our Church, there was a growing conviction that the time had come when evangelistic effort, that of seeking the salvation of souls, should receive more emphasis, and that in some parts of our territory this conviction had expressed itself in a demand that our Church lead out in an aggressive evangelistic effort commensurate with her opportunity and responsibility.

We were aware on the other hand of the fact that as to the method according to which this evangelistic effort was to be directed, there was no unanimity of conviction, but that every school of methods known to modern evangelistic work had its advocates.

With these facts before us, we felt that our task was largely educational and inspirational, and that through the first year's work the Church should be led up to the point where she would arise in her might, and place the evangelist, and the work of the evangelist, where we believe God intended it should be, in the lead. We adopted a plan in which no radical changes were advocated, but which was sufficiently elastic to fit into local conditions and convictions. That plan is as follows:

1. IN THE PASTORATE. We recognize the pastorate as the most important office in the church, and we believe that the pastor holds the key to the situation. This being true, we seek to cultivate the evangelistic spirit in every pastorate and thereby encourage evangelistic preaching and effort.

2. IN THE PRESBYTERY. (a) Procure in each Presbytery a Corresponding Member, who shall be nominated by the chairman of the Local Home Missions Committee of that Presbytery, and who shall work under the direction of the Local Home Missions Committee. This Corresponding Member is to represent the Assembly's Committee in that Presbytery.

(b) Hold evangelistic conferences wherever the way may be clear, in all the Presbyteries and Synods within the bounds of our Church this committee to do its work through the Corresponding Member.

(c) Seek to procure the election of one or more evangelists in every Presbytery, and organize evangelistic campaigns to reach the weakest churches through the appointment of pastors to conduct one or more special series of services.

3. IN THE CHURCH AT LARGE. (a) Encourage, and, where possible, organize evangelistic campaigns in churches, simultaneous evangelistic campaigns in cities, Presbyteries and Synods.

(b) Recommend and disseminate literature approved by the committee, Rev. C. R. Hemp-hill, D. D., being chairman of the Literature Committee and the one to pass upon all literature to be endorsed.

We feel that we have done our best service to the Church through the Presbyteries, and the way most of the Corresponding Members have taken up the work lead us to expect the best results from this part of the plan.

In the prosecution of the work as here outlined, the committee solicited funds from individuals, receiving the sum of \$402.25, and disbursed same as shown by the report of the treasurer, Mr. W. H. Raymond, hereto attached, and marked Appendix "A."

The first General Conference was held at Montreat, N. C., last August, when for three days representative men from all over our Church gathered to discuss questions of vital importance to this work, as can be seen by reference to a copy of the program hereto attached.

Since this conference, our main effort has